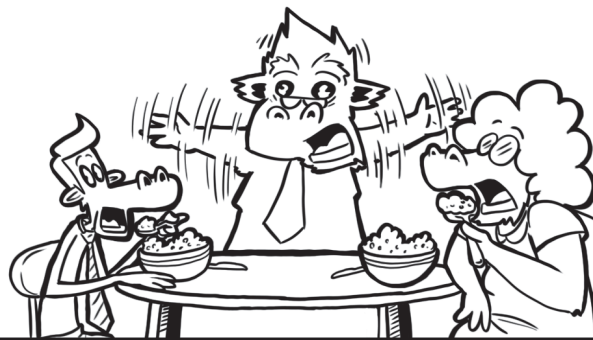


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Thrashing the FNB Magalies Monster

Buffelspoort – Wessel Botha and Danielle Strydom claimed the coveted title of FNB Magalies Monster MTB Classic Champion at the ATKV Buffelspoort on Saturday, 2 June, crossing the finish line in impressive times of 3 hours, 6 minutes and 3 seconds; and 3 hours, 44 minutes and 42 seconds respectively.

The men's race was hotly contested with Tyrone White and Philimon Sebona (2017 FNB Magalies Monster MTB Classic Champion) firmly in the mix. "I finished 2nd at the FNB Magalies Monster MTB Classic in 2017 after experiencing a technical issue with my bike in the final kilometres," admits Botha. "After 2017, the plan was to come back to the Monster to win, but I've been ill and literally only started training again two weeks ago. So today I was only going to test my form. I felt good on the Monster Climb though managing to open a small gap. I pushed hard until I had a 1-minute lead. I then decided to ride my own race, keeping my tempo. I didn't ride too hard, always keeping something in the tank in case someone managed to catch me. Winning is a great confidence booster as I will be taking part in the upcoming SA Mountain Bike and Cross Country Champs. The FNB Magalies Monster is a fantastic race. The route is great and the last 20km is really tough. It's a real monster."

Making his Magalies Monster debut on the day, White is pleased to be the runner up. "My father-in-law competed last year and couldn't stop talking about how hectic it is. This year we decided to make it a family weekend away. We're all staying at the ATKV. The event was fantastic, rough and tough. I've never seen so many rocks before! My plan was to hold my power, ride within myself and finish strong. It worked! I am very happy to finish in 2nd place. I would recommend the FNB Magalies Monster to everyone. You experience a real feeling of accomplishment when you cross the finish line."

Danielle Strydom obliterated the field in the women's race. "This is the first year that I am riding under-23 and am old enough to take part in the full FNB

Magalies Monster (70km)," says Strydom. "I think I might have left my legs up on the Monster. My plan was just to see how it goes and then take it from there. I really enjoyed the race. Crossing finish line first is an amazing experience. It definitely makes up for all the climbs."

Sanet Coetzee crossed the finish line in 2nd place. "We take part every year and really enjoy the FNB Magalies Monster. It's the best MTB race on the calendar. My plan was to have fun and see where I finish. Crossing the finish line in 2nd place is a bonus." Nicolette Griffioen rounded off the women's podium.

Keagan Bontekoning completed the +35km FNB Magalies Monster MTB Classic in 01:30:04. Brendan van Eeden came in 2nd, while Wicus Breytenbach finished 3rd. Jone van Eeden claimed gold in the women's +35km FNB Magalies Monster MTB Classic in a time of 01:58:20. Sunique van der Walt came in 2nd, while Rozalia Kubyana finished 3rd. Shaan Immelman was the first rider home in the men's +15km FNB Magalies Monster MTB Classic in a time of 00:37:31. Ruben Gombos came in 2nd, while Christo Lombard finished 3rd.

Christina (Christelle) le Roux secured the top spot on the podium in the women's +15km FNB Magalies Monster MTB Classic in a time of 00:44:24. Nicole Botha came in 2nd, while Karla Mari Venter finished 3rd.

"Well done to all participants and cycling enthusiasts who came out in numbers and put in sterling performances to continue making this event an outstanding success. This flagship event continues to gain prominence on the South African MTB calendar by not only providing an adrenaline-packed adventure to professional athletes, but also a fun memorable experience for clients, family and friends, along diverse routes with breath-taking scenery. Congratulations to the winners for a well-deserved victory. We look forward to seeing all of you again next year," says Eric Enslin, FNB Private Wealth CEO.



Wessel Botha in action at the 16th annual FNB Magalies Monster MTB Classic on Saturday, 2 June. Photo Credit: Tobias Ginsberg



Wessel Botha leads the men's race. Photo Credit: Tobias Ginsberg

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